

my point person for moving nationally significant legislation through the committee and the Senate. When I was the majority leader, she led the Senate Energy Task Force staff efforts.

Beth has been a key figure in the enactment of several important bills into law: the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and its previous incarnations, the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, the Aviation Investment and Revitalization Vision Act, and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users. She also shepherded the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2005 through the Senate and the Advanced Telecommunications and Opportunities Reform Act through the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee during the 109th Congress. During the 110th Congress, she has already guided the Aviation Investment and Modernization Act through the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. Beth always ensured that these bills were good for the Nation and good for Mississippi.

While Beth is as gracious and charming as one would expect from her Mississippi upbringing, she is also assertive and confident, and deserving of respect for her abilities. She never hesitated to take charge of her areas of responsibility or speak up if she felt she or anyone else was being overlooked.

Beth is not just a hard working, skilled staff member. She has been part of my personal office family for almost 10 years. Whether training a new staff member, guiding interns through their Washington experience, or cutting birthday cakes, Beth has been a trusted, steady, and caring colleague. As a former intern, she always ensured that our legislative interns were provided challenging assignments and treated with respect.

Mr. President, Beth has come a long way from Brandon, MS, and the University of Mississippi. In addition to being a seasoned staff member, she also is a wife and a mother. Beth now moves on to a new phase in her life, leaving for the private sector and making more time for her husband Les and young daughter Ann Miller. We all will miss her very much. I wish her the very best as she heads out in a new direction and pray that God will continue to bless her and her family.

NOPEC

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of S. 879, the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act of 2007, or NOPEC. The Judiciary Committee today reports that bill favorably, with an accompanying committee report. This is not the first time the committee has reported this legislation, but it ought to be the last. Indeed, the Senate Judiciary Committee under three different chairmen has now considered and recommended this legislation for passage. It is long past time for this bill to become law.

NOPEC will hold certain oil producing nations accountable for their collusive behavior that has artificially—and drastically—reduced the supply and inflated the price of fuel. It authorizes the Attorney General to take legal action against any foreign state, including members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, for price fixing and artificially limiting the amount of available oil.

Just this morning, I read in the Washington Post that the Energy Department declared that “gasoline prices last week came within a half penny of tying the modern era’s inflation-adjusted record set in March 1981,” and that the nationwide average price at the pump is \$3.218 a gallon. That is a rise of more than 11 cents a gallon just in the last week, according to the Energy Information Administration. These increases in price have led to renewed calls for investigation into their causes, but we already know well one significant cause: anticompetitive conduct by oil cartels.

While OPEC actions remain protected from antitrust enforcement, the ability of the governments involved to wreak havoc on the American economy remains unchecked. If OPEC were simply a collection of foreign businesses engaged in this type of behavior, they would already be subject to the antitrust laws.

I am disappointed that the administration recently announced it would oppose this bill and recommend that the President veto it. When entities engage in anticompetitive conduct that harms the American consumers it is the responsibility of the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute. It is wrong to let OPEC producers off the hook just because their anticompetitive practices come with the seal of approval of national governments.

Americans deserve better, and it is time for Congress to act. With the summer months approaching, there is no end in sight to the rise in gas prices. I am hopeful that the Senate will take up and pass this legislation in June. I thank Senator KOHL for his leadership on this important issue.

REVEREND JERRY FALWELL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I want to say a few words about Reverend Jerry Falwell, who passed away last week. Reverend Falwell loved God, loved people, and loved his country. He not only spoke about what he believed, he acted on what he believed and worked to help people and to make this country better.

Jerry Falwell led a remarkable and inspiring life. He was born in Lynchburg, VA, the son of a nonreligious bootlegger and the grandson of a staunch atheist. This family background makes all the more real, some might say dramatic, his conversion to Christianity and his lifelong unwavering commitment to Christ.

In 1956, he founded Thomas Road Baptist Church. Just 35 people attended its first meeting in the local elementary school. Although Reverend Falwell became known to most for his national political efforts, he was in his heart a local church pastor and he led that congregation for more than 50 years, seeing it grow to more than 24,000 members.

Reverend Falwell knew that faith cannot be segregated from life and that Christ calls us to be doers, rather than simply hearers, of the Word. Reverend Falwell founded the Elim Home in 1959 as a residential program providing spiritual restoration and help for those battling alcohol and drug addiction. The home still operates today, just north of Lynchburg.

Proverbs 22:6 says to train up a child in the way he should go and so, in 1967, Reverend Falwell founded Lynchburg Christian Academy for children from kindergarten through high school. Four years later, he founded Lynchburg Bible College with just 154 students and 4 full-time faculty. Today, Liberty University is the largest evangelical college in the world, fully accredited with more than 20,000 students from around the world. In recent years, Reverend Falwell returned to this mission of Christian education and he was at work in his office when he passed away. His vision there continues to unfold. Liberty University Law School, which achieved provisional ABA accreditation in just 18 months, graduated its first class this year and a medical school is on the drawing board.

When it came to issues such as the sanctity of human life, Reverend Falwell once again put action to his words. He founded the Liberty Godparent Foundation in 1982, opening a home for unwed mothers while other evangelicals were content simply to protest abortion. I certainly agree that abortion is wrong because of what abortion is and does, but Reverend Falwell demonstrated that there is more to being pro-life than simply being opposed to death. He set an inspiring example, and today there are more crisis pregnancy centers than abortion clinics in America.

Reverend Falwell is perhaps best known for what launched him onto the national stage, founding the Moral Majority organization in 1979. This effort brought millions of Americans into the political process and made them more informed, more active citizens. In 1995, he launched a monthly magazine, the National Liberty Journal, which reaches hundreds of thousands of pastors and Christian citizens. The author of more than a dozen books over nearly 30 years, Reverend Falwell continued to write his own e-mail newsletter and columns distributed widely through the world.

Reverend Falwell certainly gained his share of notoriety for positions on certain issues or particularly controversial statements. That happens to people who speak out, especially those

who speak against the drift of the prevailing culture. Reverend Falwell chose to adopt a national profile and received a good amount of criticism for taking public stances on difficult issues. But he accepted consequences and was not above admitting and apologizing for his mistakes or, after more thought and reflection, adjusting some views and adapting to change.

Reverend Falwell was not nearly as easily labeled as some might think. For all the opposition he received from those on the left, some on the right criticized him for appearing to move away from the fundamentalist and toward the evangelical camp. Others attacked him for his friendship with leaders of the charismatic movement, speaking at conferences hosted by groups or leaders from different Christian traditions, or working closely with Roman Catholic leaders. His Liberty Baptist College has hosted speakers from Reverend Billy Graham to, yes, Senator EDWARD KENNEDY. Through it all, Reverend Falwell stayed true to his own convictions while working with others on issues of common purpose to help people and to make our country better.

One of the most telling tributes about Reverend Jerry Falwell comes from a most unexpected source. After losing a libel suit to Penthouse publisher Larry Flynt in the Supreme Court back in 1988, Reverend Falwell befriended Flynt and the two appeared together in numerous media venues, visited each other, and even exchanged Christmas cards. In a column published just a few days ago in the Los Angeles Times, Flynt declared that while he disagreed with everything Reverend Falwell preached, he found that they actually had a lot in common. He wrote: "The more I got to know Falwell, the more I began to see that his public portrayals were caricatures of himself." The ultimate result of their relationship was, as Flynt put it, "just as shocking a turn to me as was winning that famous Supreme Court case: We became friends."

Jerry Falwell leaves behind Macel, his wife of nearly 50 years, his three children and eight grandchildren. His son Jerry has taken up the mantle as Chancellor of Liberty University and his son Jonathan had already been named Executive Pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church. Reverend Falwell's example, his legacy, is so much more than the controversial remarks, views, or positions that some want to emphasize. Reverend Jerry Falwell lived what he believed, he put action to his faith, he inspired and educated, he led and equipped. He was a pastor, a teacher, and a leader. He helped change countless lives and helped make our country better. For all those reasons and so many more, he will be missed.

THE MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate

crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On May 18, 2007, in Greenville, SC, Sean Kennedy was beaten by an unnamed man which resulted in his death. Kennedy, a gay man, was punched in the face and knocked to the ground where he sustained injuries to his head. Kennedy died of his injuries later that night at a local hospital. The attacker was later brought into custody and charged with murder. Because Kennedy was attacked while leaving a gay bar and the attacker used anti-gay epithets, the Greenville County Sheriff turned the case over to the FBI for investigation as a hate crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Matthew Shepard Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

NEW HAMPSHIRE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

• Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the 2007 recipients of the New Hampshire Excellence in Education Awards. These prestigious awards, commonly called the EDies, are presented each year to individuals and schools who demonstrate the highest level of excellence in education.

The EDies were founded as a way to honor the best of the best among New Hampshire's educators. In the 14 years since, there has been a rich source of talented and successful teachers, administrators, schools, and school boards to draw from to honor at each annual event. This year was no exception.

Those individuals selected have been compared against a criteria set by others in their discipline through their sponsoring organization. Schools are also chosen by experienced educators and community leaders in New Hampshire based on guidelines established by the New Hampshire Excellence in Education Board of Directors. I am proud to recognize the individuals and schools who will receive this year's awards on June 9, 2007.

In addition, I would also like to recognize the many teachers who have played such an important role in my children's lives and in my own life, as well. As I serve in the Senate, I remain proud and grateful for the excellent education I received in the public education system of the State of New Hampshire.

Mr. President, I ask that the list of the 2007 New Hampshire Excellence in Education Award winners be printed in the RECORD.

The list following.

2007 NEW HAMPSHIRE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Susan E. Auerbach, Ph.D.; Officer Robert Bennett; Susan Bradley; Linda Burdick; Marjorie Chiafery; Deborah Couture; Debora Crowder; Judith Elliott; Debbie D. Gay; William Gibson; Christina Gribben; Jack Grube; Kathleen Hill; Russell Holden; Dr. Steven Kelley; Carolyn Kelley; Dr. Beverly R. King; Joseph Kopitsky; Bruce Larson; Dr. Patricia "Irish" Lindberg.

Shari J. Litch-Gray, Ph.D.; Constance Manchester-Bonefant; Deborah Nichols; Rosemary Nunnally; Jason Parent; William Ranauro; David Remillard; Linda Sherouse; Kathryn L. Skoglund; Marcia Trexler; Debra Vasconcellos; Karen P. Whitmore; Dr. Barbara Young-Hoffman.

Ashland Elementary School; Belmont Middle School; Chichester Central School; Claremont School Board; Hampstead Central School; Hampstead Middle School; Kearsarge Regional Middle School; South Londonderry Elementary School; Adeline C. Marston School; Pembroke Academy.●

RECOGNIZING FRANKFORT, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Frankfort, SD. Founded in 1882, the town of Frankfort will celebrate its 125th anniversary this year.

Located in Spink County, Frankfort was named after Frankfort I. Fisher, a settler who explored the area. It was also named in part after Frankfort, Germany. Frankfort has been a successful and thriving community for the past 125 years and I am confident that it will continue to serve as an example of South Dakota values and traditions for the next 125 years.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Frankfort on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

RECOGNIZING WARNER, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Warner, SD. Located in Brown County, the town of Warner will celebrate the 125th anniversary of its founding this year.

Since its beginning in 1881, Warner has been a strong reflection of South Dakota's values and traditions. Their community spirit was recognized in 2000, when Warner was honored as South Dakota's "Community of the Year." As they celebrate this milestone anniversary, I am confident that Warner will continue to thrive and succeed for the next 125 years.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Warner on their anniversary and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

RECOGNIZING LETCHER, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Letcher, SD. The town of